

Questions to Ask Your Doctor about Breast Cancer Screening

1. Should I be screened for breast cancer? How do I make sense of conflicting screening recommendations from professional organizations?
2. What factors affect my individual risk of developing breast cancer?
3. How can I know or calculate my individual risk for developing breast cancer?
4. What are the different tests available for breast cancer screening?
5. Is one test sufficient, or should they be combined?
6. Which test or tests should I have?
7. How effective is mammography for detecting breast cancer?
8. What is the chance of a false negative mammogram (a mammogram that misses an abnormality)?
9. What is the chance of a false positive mammogram (a mammogram that appears to find something that is not actually a problem)?
10. How do my individual characteristics (breast size or density, age, whether or not I have gone through menopause) affect the detection rate of a mammogram?
11. Are there different types of mammograms? If so, what are the differences in techniques and effectiveness?



12. What is breast tomosynthesis (3D-mammogram)? How does this compare to standard mammograms?
13. If you are recommending mammography, which type of mammogram do you recommend for me?
14. How are mammogram results reported? What are Breast Imaging Reporting and Data System (BI-RADS) categories?
15. What is the next step if my mammogram detects an abnormality?
16. How often should I have a mammogram? How do the conflicting frequency recommendations from professional organizations apply to me?
17. Is ultrasound used for breast cancer screening? Should I have a breast ultrasound?
18. Is MRI used for breast cancer screening? Should I have a breast MRI?
19. At what age, if any, is mammography no longer necessary?
20. How often should I undergo a clinical breast exam (examination by my health professional)?
21. How effective is a clinical breast exam for detecting breast cancer?
22. Should I see a specialist for a clinical breast exam? If so, what type of specialist (gynecologist, breast surgeon, oncologist)?

